

**FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS**  
**SCHOOL OF NURSING**

**HANDBOOK FOR MSN GRADUATE  
NURSING STUDENTS**

**Supplement to the Ferris State University Code of Student Community  
Standards**

**JULY 2023**

*Ferris State University is an equal opportunity institution. For information on the University's  
Policy on Non-Discrimination, visit <http://www.ferris.edu/non-discrimination>.*

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## **SCHOOL OF NURSING VISION**

The Ferris State University School of Nursing's vision is to be recognized as a leader in innovative and scholarly nursing education at the undergraduate and graduate levels with programming that is evidence-based and globally focused in design while remaining responsive to the diverse needs of the student population, the profession of nursing and an evolving health care delivery system.

## **SCHOOL OF NURSING Master's of Science in Nursing (MSN) MISSION**

The mission of the graduate program in nursing is to provide an innovative curriculum that prepares graduates for leadership in specialty areas of practice that directly and indirectly influence health care outcomes and advance the nursing profession.

## **SCHOOL OF NURSING VALUES**

To fulfill its vision, the School of Nursing embraces the core values of the university which are conceptualized to support professional nursing education and practice:

**Collaboration:** The School of Nursing values collaboration among educational disciplines to provide relevant nursing education programs. Collaboration among interprofessional health disciplines is valued as a critical component of the delivery of patient care that reflects quality and safety.

**Diversity:** The School of Nursing is committed to recruit and retain a diverse population of students and faculty prepared to serve a diverse population and to embrace a diversity of ideas, beliefs and cultures.

**Ethical Community:** The School of Nursing is committed to the development of a professional nurse who will practice within the Nursing Code of Ethics and whose practice is guided by the values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity and social justice.

**Excellence:** The School of Nursing is committed to provide nursing programs that are built upon and responsive to established standards of practice and professional performance. The cultivation of both scholarship and service among faculty and students that supports the advancement of the profession is highly valued.

**Learning:** The School of Nursing values education that is learner-centered and incorporates current evidence-based practices in nursing and liberal arts education. The School of Nursing embraces the use of technology in the delivery of instruction to support the patient care environment. Finally, the ideal of lifelong learning is valued as an integral component of professionalism.

**Opportunity:** The School of Nursing is committed to provide opportunity for both career entry and career advancement within the profession of nursing and to deliver nursing programs that prepare professional nurses to practice in a rapidly changing global health care environment.

## **ACADEMIC ADVISING**

The Graduate Program Coordinator will serve as the graduate student's advisor. Graduate students should discuss their plan for program progression with their assigned advisor who is available by telephone, e-mail, or a face-to-face or virtual meeting.

## **ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS**

Request an official academic transcript from:

Records Office  
Center for Student Services 201  
Ferris State University  
1201 S State Street  
Big Rapids MI 49307-2020

Or call: (231) 591-2792

Or online at <http://www.ferris.edu/admissions/registrar/transcriptRequest.htm>

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT**

Ferris State University affirms its steady commitment and dedicated efforts to provide equal employment opportunity as described by federal and state laws, the Affirmative Action Program of the University, and other pronouncements made by its President. Ferris State University will ensure equal opportunity without regard to race, creed or religion, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, height weight, sexual preference, veteran status, handicap, or other characteristics which cannot lawfully be the basis for educational or employment opportunity.

## **ADMISSION CRITERIA Nursing Education Certificate Program**

The following criteria are required for the *Certificate Programs* in Nursing:

1. BSN degree – 3.00 GPA or higher
2. Licensure as a Registered Nurse
3. Letter of Intent (writing sample)
4. Official Transcripts (from BSN and/or MSN)
5. Completed Application Form

## **ADMISSION CRITERIA Master's Program**

The following criteria are required for the *MSN Program* in Nursing:

1. BSN or bachelor's degree – 3.00 GPA or higher
2. Licensure as a Registered Nurse
3. A recommendation of 1 – 2 years of practice as an RN
4. Letter of Intent (writing sample)
  - RN to MSN candidates may submit their Service Learning Synthesis Paper
5. Two (2) professional references who can speak to the applicant's ability to complete graduate level coursework.
6. Curriculum Vitae or resume
7. Official transcripts
8. Completed Application Form
9. International Students: TOEFL – minimum score of 550

<https://www.ferris.edu/health-professions/Nursing/MSN-program/MSN-Admission-Requirements.htm>

#### AMERICAN NURSES' ASSOCIATION STANDARDS

Ferris State University's Nursing graduate students are expected to abide by the standards set forth in the American Nurses' Association Code for Nurses and the American Nurses' Association Standards of Nursing Practice. These documents are available through the American Nurses' Association.

#### **AMERICANS with DISABILITIES ACT**

Ferris State University is committed to following the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student with a disability or think you may have a disability, contact the Disabilities Services office at 231.591.3057 (voice), or email [ecds@ferris.edu](mailto:ecds@ferris.edu) to discuss your request further. More information is available on the web at

<https://www.ferris.edu/RSS/ecds/disabilities-services/homepage.htm>

#### **ATTENDANCE**

Ferris State University's graduate nursing students are expected to participate in all learning experiences. **Absences from any learning experience may result in a lowered grade** (as determined by individual faculty as indicated in his or her course materials) and, thus, may jeopardize progression in the program.

#### **COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS**

As an online program, it is important for graduate students to have supportive technology. Student's technical requirements include **reliable and high-speed internet access**. Because computer hardware requirements change, students should have minimum system requirements at their entry into the program. Minimum software requirements include **Microsoft Word** for creation of scholarly papers, **Microsoft PowerPoint** for creation of scholarly presentations, and **Adobe Acrobat Reader** to open, read, and print scholarly articles. Please note the Technology Standards: <https://www.ferris.edu/it/itstandards.htm>

Students must register for the course through Ferris to gain access to the online course site and have a valid Ferris State ID access and password. Ferris State University uses the Canvas platform to provide the online course infrastructure. It is strongly recommended that students are familiar with basic computing skills. <https://orientation.ferris.edu/>

Students will need a computer with a built-in microphone or a microphone headset for creating audio presentations to upload online. This supportive technology will help the graduate student complete the online course requirements.

## **CONDITIONAL ADMISSION**

Conditional Admission may be granted in cases where selected admission criteria have not been demonstrated. The Graduate Program Coordinator will make recommendations regarding conditional admission to the Director of the School of Nursing, whose approval is required. Continued admission will be conditional based on the student's meeting the following requirements in the MSN program.

If a student is admitted with:

- a. a GPA of less than 3.00, the student must successfully complete 9 semester hours of graduate work with a 3.0 GPA to qualify for regular admission
- b. undergraduate deficiencies, the student must clear any deficiencies in his/her undergraduate education before 9 semester hours of graduate work has been completed
- c. TOEFL scores between 500-549, the student must enroll in and successfully complete recommended ESL courses or may retake the TOEFL exam

Special enrollment will be permitted for students who are not planning to become candidates for a graduate degree in the MSN program. Special enrollment will be permitted only on a semester-by- semester basis and is subject to program approval.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Materials prepared by students relating to course assignments must conform to ethical standards of confidentiality and the client's right to privacy.

Students and faculty may not take any patient records, notes, or any identifying data out of a clinical agency on paper [must be shredded] or electronically.

In addition, information regarding student records is covered by the Privacy Act of 1974. Therefore, student files are private, and most information may not be released without consent of the student.

## **COURSE MATERIAL**

Each nursing course has course materials and required texts that are available through the FSU bookstore. Information about ordering course materials is provided when the student registers.

## CREDIT HOUR DEFINITION

Students will participate in interactive online learning for the equivalent of 50 minutes of learning activities per credit hour per week. However, based on the student's background and experience, the actual time in learning activities may vary. Additionally, the capstone courses require a core practicum and an advanced specialty role practicum (120 hours each). These practicum experiences are intended to prepare the graduate student adequately for role entry and certification.

## CURRICULUM SEQUENCE

The sequencing of courses in the MSN curriculum is intentional to maximize skills and knowledge development. Some courses have co- or pre-requisites. Therefore, deviation from the identified course sequence may result in difficulty progressing or meeting graduation requirements. Please check with your nursing advisor before omitting, substituting, or delaying any course.

## GRADING SCALE

The grading scale for all nursing (NURS) courses is:

| Letter Grade | Honor Points per Credit Hour | Numerical Grade |
|--------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| A            | 4.0                          | 95 - 100        |
| A-           | 3.7                          | 92 - 94         |
| B+           | 3.3                          | 89 - 91         |
| B            | 3.0                          | 85 - 88         |
| B-           | 2.7                          | 82 - 84         |
| C+           | 2.3                          | 79 - 81         |
| C            | 2.0                          | 75 - 78         |
| C-           | 1.7                          | 72 - 74         |
| D+           | 1.3                          | 69 - 71         |
| D            | 1.0                          | 65 - 68         |
| D-           | 0.7                          | 62 - 64         |
| F            | 0.0                          | 61 and below    |

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To meet the requirements for graduation, the MSN student must meet all the required program conditions and requirements as outlined below:

1. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 must be maintained in the MSN program.
2. There can be no more than 2 grades of 2.0 or "C" in any courses.
3. No grade below "C" is acceptable for graduation; only one class may be repeated once.
3. A minimum of 70% of the credits must be earned at Ferris State University.

4. Successful completion of all required coursework as outlined in the curriculum plan.
5. Successful completion of the practicum experiences.
7. Successful completion of the professional portfolio.
8. No more than 6 hours of independent study/special topics.
9. There is a time limit of five (5) years from first enrollment in a graduate class. An extension may be granted in extenuating circumstances.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is “the taking of ideas, writings, etc. from another and passing them off as one’s own”. This practice is not acceptable to the University, the College, the Nursing programs, or to the instructors. In an academic setting, this is equivalent to grand larceny. Severe consequences may result and can include failure in the project or in the class, dismissal from the program, and/or dismissal from the University.

## **POLICY FOR STUDENT COMPLAINT**

The Code of Student Community Standards states, “each Ferris State University student has a right to initiate a complaint that may bring about an investigation and/or disciplinary action involving another member of the University academic community.” Ferris State University is committed to assuring a supportive process that invites student feedback in a manner that promotes a positive learning environment. It is important however that students follow established policies and procedures to resolve their complaints. When a student has an issue with a grade, internship or other student/faculty issue, it is the responsibility of the student to use a progressive procedure to resolve the issue. Please read the official “Student Complaint Policy: located at:

[https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/academicaffairs/Forms\\_Policies/Documents/Policy\\_Letters/AA-Student-Complaints.pdf](https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/academicaffairs/Forms_Policies/Documents/Policy_Letters/AA-Student-Complaints.pdf)

This policy provides a systematic means of resolving student/faculty issues. It is important that you understand and follow this policy should such a situation occur.

## **PROBATION/DISMISSAL**

1. Students will be placed on academic probation in the MSN program if any of the following conditions occur:
  - A grade of a less than a “C” is earned in a graduate course.
  - The overall GPA drops below 3.0.
2. Any course in which a grade of less than a 2.0 or “C” is earned will not count towards graduation and must be repeated.
3. Only one course may be repeated one time in the MSN program. There may be no more than two withdrawals from courses for non-medical reasons.
4. Students may be academically dismissed from the MSN program if any of the following conditions occur:
  - A grade of 2.0 or less is earned in a *third* graduate course.



- A grade of 2.0 or less is earned in the *second* attempt of the same graduate course.
  - The student is unable to raise the overall GPA to 3.0 or higher after two semesters.
5. Students who do not complete the program within the 5-year time frame allowed may be dismissed from the program, unless an extension has been permitted. Extensions will only be allowed if the student is making consistent, and satisfactory progress in the program as evidenced by a GPA of 3.0 or higher and no more than 2 course withdrawals.
  6. Students who are dismissed from the program are not eligible for re- entry into the program.
  7. Students with extenuating circumstances may appeal their dismissal from the program, as outlined in the Academic Dismissal Policy at [Academic Dismissals \(ferris.edu\)](#)  
[AA-Academic-Dismissal.pdf \(ferris.edu\)](#)

## **PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS**

There is a total of 270 hours of required practicum experiences within the program. The first experience is in NURS 551 and consists of 30 hours of community practicum time. In the final capstone courses, all graduate students will complete **two, 120 hour** supervised practicum experiences. These practicum experiences will build on knowledge attained in the core and specialty courses. Students will create proposals in NURS 711 and 712 for their project and role immersion and will identify preceptors to guide and supervise the proposed experiences. Preceptors will need to be prepared at the master's level or higher in the nursing discipline and have the requisite experience to guide the student effectively. Students will then implement their proposals in NURS 791 and 792. Students may complete these experiences in their current place of employment, but it should not be on their current unit or with a current supervisor. Students may elect to complete the practicums in a place other than their current place of employment. (Students should be aware there may be a minor fee (usually in the area of \$100.00 associated with completing the practicum at an outside facility depending on that agency/organization's requirements.) Students should be prepared to dedicate the number of hours required to complete the practicum experiences during the semester taken. Students in the informatics track may be given special consideration due to limited numbers of preceptors in certain regions.

If students are unable to find a site or preceptor, assistance will be provided to secure a location and preceptor. However, students should be aware that this may not be in the location desired so travel could be required to the site.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students at Ferris State University have the right to:

- Be treated as an adult
- Be treated with respect
- Know the instructor's expectations for you in the class

Know the grading scale  
Obtain a written syllabus  
Know all class policies (attendance, etc.) Know the instructor's office hours  
Know all safety procedures (if applicable)

Students at Ferris State University have the following responsibilities:

To attend class on a regular basis according to the requirements set forth in the instructor's syllabus  
To be on time for class  
To be prepared for class  
To wear appropriate clothing to class  
To use appropriate language in class  
To take responsibility for your own learning  
To adhere to the academic honesty policies  
To respect all points of view, everyone's rights and feelings

If a student fails to fulfill his/her classroom responsibilities, such behavior may reflect negatively on his/her grade in the class, and/or disciplinary action may result.

### **TRANSFER CREDIT**

A student can transfer into the MSN program 30% of the total credits (no more than 11 credits in a 37-credit program) from an accredited university. The student must formally request to have the courses considered for transfer credit by approaching the MSN Program Coordinator with a specific request. Each course syllabus must be submitted for review to the MSN Program Coordinator, who will then decide whether the course is transferable based on its equivalency in content, structure, and hours. Once an equivalent course has been taken, the student will lose the opportunity to receive transfer credits for that course. Therefore, it is advised that students do not take courses that are being considered for transfer credit until final determination of equivalency.

### **WRITING STYLE REQUIREMENT**

The current edition of the American Psychological Association Manual is the accepted departmental format for any papers submitted in any nursing course.

# **FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY NURSING PROGRAM**

## **GRADUATE NURSING STUDENT HANDBOOK**

My signature acknowledges receipt of a copy of the Ferris Handbook for Graduate Nursing students. I understand it is my responsibility to read and understand the content herein, and any additional supplements that I may receive while enrolled in the Nursing program. I understand the Handbook is updated yearly and may contain changes. I understand it is my responsibility to stay informed of these changes during my time in the program. I assume responsibility for abiding by the policies and statements in the Handbook.

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Signature

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Date

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Name Printed